Udayarpalayam Samasthanam

A study by Venkatesh Kumar G

Abstract : This article examines the 500-year history of the Udayarpalayam Samasthanam, a significant zamindari estate in Tamil Nadu. By synthesizing genealogical records, revenue registers (Inam and Old Settlement Registers), and private archival documents, this study traces the transition of the "Kachi" rulers from their origins in Kanchipuram to their establishment as regional sovereigns. It further investigates the socio-political impact of their rule, including their role as religious protectors and their eventual integration into the colonial administrative framework of the British East India Company.Udayarpalayam samasthanam is a 500 year old zamindari that existed between AD 1500-1900 in Tamilnadu. Their founders were natives of kanchipuram hailing from the ancient "Raja Veedhi" or Princely Street in kanchipuram hence they added the prefix "Kachi" meaning 'Ruler of Kanchi' before their names. One such was Sri Kachi Yuva Pallikonda Rangappa Kalakka Thola Udayar who was then the ruler of Kanchi in AD 1500. Veera Simha Rayar was the ruler of South India during the reign of Vijayanagar Empire.

Fig 1: Insignia of Udayarpalayam

Origins and the "Kachi" Identity

Veera Simha had his rule spread over Jingi, Trichy, Madurai, Tanjore and Mysore and he appointed his own men as rulers of the region. One such is Ramabhadra Naik of Jinji state. Kachi Pallikonda Rangappa Udayar was sent to assist the ruler of Jinji and upon his mighty success Udayar was granted a Jahgir by the emperor.

During the invasion of Jinji State by the Bedar Dynasty in the early 16th century, Ramabhadra Naik sent Udayar to fight the war, and upon his esteemed success, Rayar granted him numerous titles *Bareed Sapthangaharanu (who severed the seven limbs of the body of Bareed), Uana Vijaya Vasi Kritlia Kainsia Thoothumhikahharana (who possesses a kind of pipe made of bell metal to proclaim his success in war and which pipe was captured in a battle), Kanakathanda Manditharuna Chathiralaiichana (whose insignia is a red umbrella with a gold handle), Nava Vithanga Bherirava Mukaritha Diganthara (the sound of whose drums pervades all directions so as to drown that made by those of his enemies), Kanchipurdthipala (who is the ruler of Kancheepuram), Kaldkka Thola .(who resembles Yama in punishing the wicked)* and he gifted him with 12 Elephants, 200 horses and 5000 Men.

Establishment of the Samasthanam

Kachi Yuva Pallikonda Rangappa Udayar and his descendants namely Peria Nallappa Udayar, Kalyana Rangappa Udayar formed a huge kingdom and set up a palace at Udayarpalayam village which later turned into a samasthanam and they had their own army, currencies, insignia and so on. During the 17th century Rangappa Udayar a descendant owned 300 villages and 27 mahanams under the Udayarpalayam samasthanam[1]

I'm listing out their lineage till one *Muthu Vijaya Rangappa Udayar* who ruled in 1765 AD.

Kachi Yuva Pallikonda Rangappa Kalakka Thola Udayar - 1504 AD

Kachi Peria Nallappa Udayar

Chinna Nallappa Udayar

Muniyappa udayar

Poyappa udayar

Ramappa Udayar

Venkatappa Udayar

Muthu Krishnappa udayar

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[1] The Aristocracy of South India by A Vadivelu 1906- The Zamindar of Udayarpalayam p195 to 243

Chandrasekara Udayar

Nalla Nainaga udayar

Kalyana Rangappa Udayar - 1600 AD

Nallappa Udayar

Socio-Religious Significance and the "Moorthy" Title

It is to be noted that *Kalyana Rangappa Udayar* established the *Udayarpalayam samasthanam*. The previous descendants were ruling from a palace in bhuvanagiri district. He was granted the entire Cuddalore by the East India Company. Letters from *Mr William Hostel and Mr. John Barley* of the East India Company confirms the same. [2]There were 22 mahanams and 250 villages under the Samasthanam. C. S. Crole, author of the *Chingleput, late Madras, District* states that It was during his reign the idols of Kanchi Kamakshi, Chidambaram Natarajan and Srirangam Perumal we protected at the Udayarpalayam Samasthanamfor 48 days which I called a mandalam against the threat of the Mughal Empire .The idols were protected, done regular poojas and worshipped in the palace of Udayarpalayam and hence we add 'moorthy' to our names[3]

After Nallappa Udayar it was

Uthama Rangappa Udayar

Rangappa Udayar

As said above Rangappa Udayar held 300 villages under his rule.

His successors were

Yuva Rangappa Udayar followed by Nallappa Udayar

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[2] Fort Saint David consultations 1712

[3] Mattison Mines and Vijayalakshmi Gourishankar, "Leadership and Individuality in South Asia: The Case of the South Indian Big Man," Journal of Asian Studies 49, no. 4 (November 1990), 776. The Kamatci idol was carried off to the Udayarpalayam jungles in what was then the domain of the Raja of Tanjore many miles to the south. The image of Kamatci was made of gold, called the Bangaru Kamatci, and it is said that the Raja of Tanjore took possession of it. This image was then installed in the Bangaru Kamatci temple in Tanjore.

Genealogical Lineage and the "Kachi Brahma Vanniyar" Sect

Muthu Vijaya Rangappa Udayar who is said to be a *Kachi Brahma Vanniyar* who in common terms is a sect of Vanniyar who follow Vishnu Religion and hail from Kanchipuram Velllar Community. They speak Telugu and Tamil and address themselves as 'Udayars or Padayachi'. In a old document of 1912 one of my forefather Govinda Padayachi mentions his native as "Elangadu" a part of Thondaimandalam and one of the Kottams in their list. It is to be noted that Thondaimandalam had 24 Kottams, 79 Naadu, 1900 Nathams (township). The total descendants of the families (gothram) are 12,000 in numbers and are vellalars in majority[4]

The entire region of Thondaimandalam was ruled by Ilanthirayan Thondaiman a descendant of the greatest Karikala Chola

Integration into Colonial Administration and Land Records

Muthu Vijaya Rangappa Udayar's one direct descendant is my earliest known forefather Valli Muthu Padayachi who names is reflected in the Inam List of 1775 AD and a Persian records an Inam Deed granted by the Nawab of Arcot Muhammed Ali Khan Wallajah in 1775 is a vital source for this research. By cross verifying with Persian translators it's confirmed as the name "valli muthu" an ardent friend of his highness is granted the village of Cuddalore as long as the sun and moon exists is significantly recorded in the deed[5]

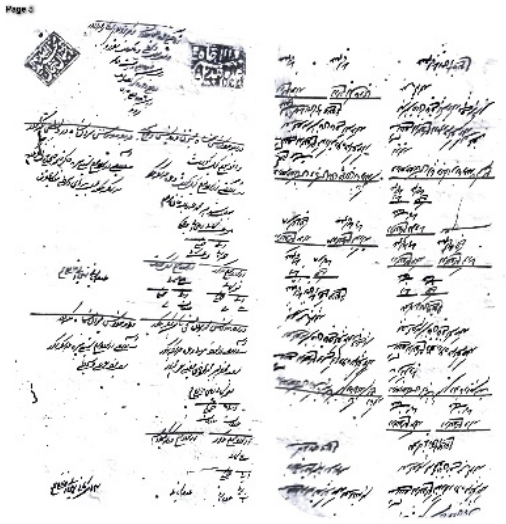


Fig 2: Persian Record

[4] Replies to Seventeen Questions proposed by the Government of Fort Saint George relative to Mirasi Right by F.W. Ellis Collector of Madras 1818- ***Appendix*** p68 onwards

[5] Persian Record Inam Deed by Muhammed Ali Khan Wallajah to one Valli Muthu – 1775 AD.

The Inam Fair Register of 1860 AD further confirms Inam Deed No: 878 granted to Valli Muthu as a permanent settlement ' *grama maniem*' by the Inamdar. Grama Maniem is an inam enjoyed by the whole community of Mirasdars in a village[6]

The register reads the following

"This maniem is enjoyed by the 15 persons mentioned in Col: 16 for house sites & backyards etc. & the exact portion held by each can is at now [not] ascertainable—some of them are heirs & relatives of the person in the general account while others hold it by assignment from them or in virtue of their right as members of the Village Community to whom the Grama Maniam being to a certain extent considered available for such purposes—The best course therefore appears to be to give a common Title Deed in the names of the several persons in Col: 16 - & Rent along with the list...

25th July 1861 – [M.] Sadasiva Pillai

Dy Collector" (Deputy Collector)

The legal heirs of Valli Muthu Padayachi are

Veera Padayachi

Pallikonda Padayachi

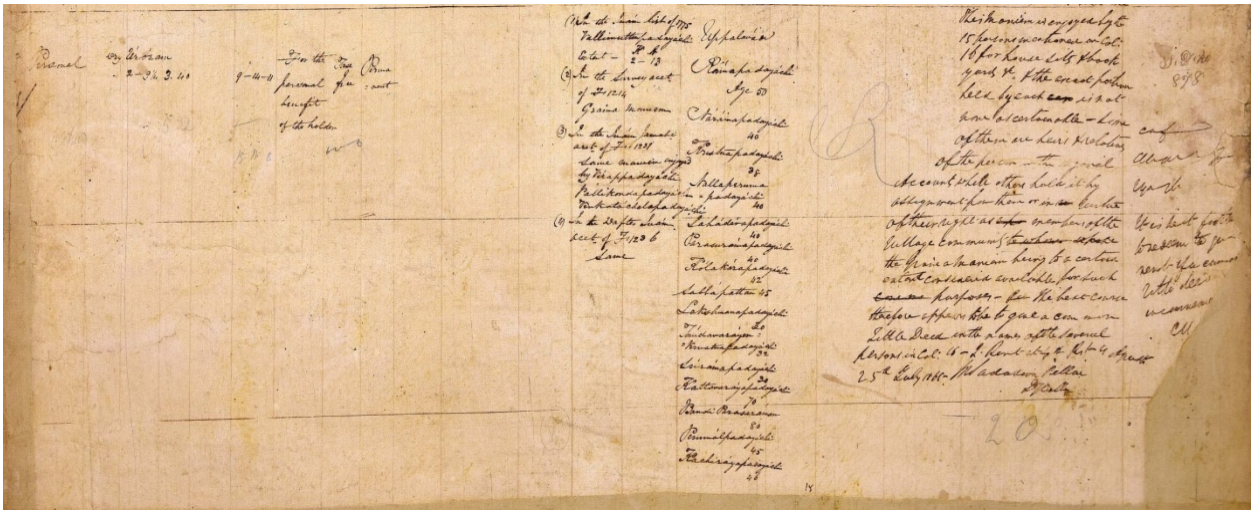
Venkatachala Padayachi

The Descendants of the above three people are also mentioned in the register with their age. 3 people can be excluded from the list of 15 as relatives, the rest being direct legal heirs[7]

I'm the direct descendant of Rama Padayachi aged 50 and I'm establishing these fact based on the Inam Fair Register, Old Settlement Register OSR, Personal Diaries, Deeds and other records in the forthcoming pages

[6] The Chingleput, Late Madras, District, Madras (India : Presidency) and Charles Stewart Crole.
[7] The Inam Fair Register -1860

Fig3: The Inam Fair Register



His son Govinda padaychi's name following his successor G Doraisamy Padayachi names are reflected in the Old Settlement Register (OSR) of villages in Cuddalore and also in the revenue records like patta, chitta etc. [8]

He built numerous temples in the villages surrounding Cuddalore and they still exists. He laid foundation for many schools and hospitals. An old document pertaining to 1912 shows his prominent existence in those villages.

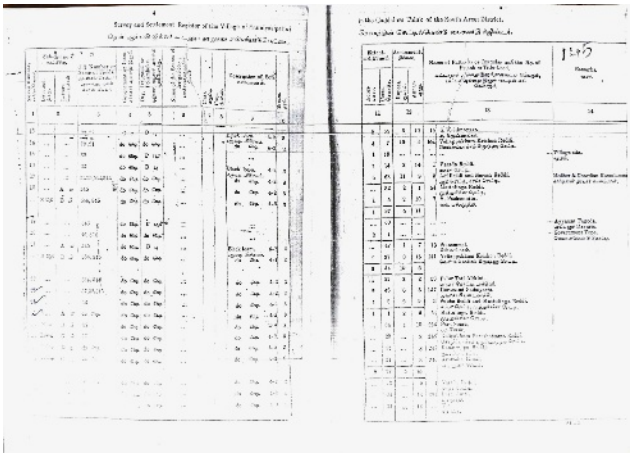


Fig 4: Old Settlement Register

In a 1912 deed Govinda Padayachi addresses himself as Govinda Udayar which I hold possession. [9]

[8] Old Settlement Register (OSR) of Cuddalore 1887
[9] Sale deed executed in 1912

He was succeeded by G Doraisamy Padayachi whose personal diary dated 1909 AD throws in more information. He owned 500 acres as per original documents and deeds. Myself still own few acres of his properties as an ancestral settlement. [10]

He had 4 sons and three daughters of which two sons expired at a very early age and only his elder son Muthu Gopal Padayachi and Muthu Krishna Padayachi could continue to retain the family legacy.

His son and my grandfather G Ranganatha Padayachi inherited his grandfather G Doraisamy Padayachi properties around 300 acres through a partition. The deed throws more light into the research. He was granted 111 survey numbers in the villages of Palur Mahanam, Pallavarayanatham, Chitrasoor and Sanniyasipettai.

My grandfather was married to the daughter of Rao Sahib K Kothandapani Pillai an Indian diplomat and a tamil scholar which strengthened our family roots. K Kothandapani Pillai hails from Tanjore district and his forefathers were direct Descendants to the Great Commander of Chola Emperor Karunakara Thondaiman[11]

Rao Sahib K Kothandapani Pillai served India as the Protector of Emigrants and also as the Controller of Emigration during World War II.

Deed executed in 1944 AD which I possess still along with some lands and deeds executed in 1947 AD adds more interest to this research .It was a agreement made between a dalit labour and the Mirazdar my grandfather accepting to serve him as a labour throughout his life. This agreement will be the last official piece of document before the Zamindari System was abolished in 1948[12]

I could also get access to the revenue records and land records maintained by my grandfather during Fasli 1381-1384 which gives a beautiful picture of how the zamindari system worked.

Hi son my father R Govindaswaminathan also availed a few of the privileges and also served as the Protector of documents because it was him who collected all original deeds, agreement, diaries and other personal data and passed it on to me and thus I could pen down this piece of history. He breathed last in 2024 AD.

Now being a clan of this lineage I still own some of their properties which I could recover through the partition deed of 1944.

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[10] Colonial diary of 1909.
[11] Thamizhagam Nenaikka Marandha Thamizh Aringargal- M Sathyamoorthy 1993
[12] Partition deed of 1944 and Agreement of 1947

The palace at Udayarpalayam still exists in a ruined state and we remain their clans in a forgotten state. I wish this article throws light into this forgotten empire.

It is to be noted that GangaikondaCholaPuram hails our ancestors names on the inscriptions placed at the top of the gopuram.

A Copper grant dating to 1785 AD mentions the grants to Palur Mahanam in which I still own some properties as per the inam deed. [13]

I'm extremely grateful to my great grandfather Rao Sahib K Kothandapani Pillai an Indian diplomat and a Tamil scholar who shines as a spotless venus guiding me all the way in penning down this piece of history!

[13] The Aristocracy of South India by A Vadivelu 1906- The Zamindar of Udayarpalayam p195 to 243

List of Images used:

1. The Insignia of Udayarpalayam 1504
2. Persian Record 1775
3. The Inam Fair Register 1860
4. Old Settlement Register of Cuddalore 1887